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THE ENGLISH BULLETIN

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The benefits of education and of useful knowledge, generally diffused through a community, are essential to the preservation of a free government.

Sam Houston

Cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy. . . . It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge and the only security that freemen desire.

Mirabeau B. Lamar

The English Bulletin

Number 12

Editors: ERMA M. GILL
L. W. PAYNE, JR.
J. B. WHAREY

The English Bulletin is intended as an organ for the expression of opinion by teachers of English in Texas concerning pedagogical and other problems that arise in their work. It will appear from one to three times a year.

Copies of this bulletin will be sent free, on application, to any teacher of English in Texas. Address University Publications, University of Texas.

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THE TEACHING OF HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH IN TEXAS

By Miss Carrie Belle Sterrett
English Supervisor of the High-School Division, State Department of Education

I. *General Information*

The following study of English in the classified and accredited high schools of Texas was made possible through the generous coöperation of over two hundred teachers of high-school English. In December, 1923, a questionnaire[1] pertaining to the teacher of English and her work was mailed to each of the 600 accredited high schools in Texas. By the end of March, 1924, 214 replies to the questionnaire had been received, and the work of compiling the facts submitted was begun. The statements and tabulations which follow are based entirely upon the information given, without any attempt to comment upon it. The figures alone should present a graphic picture of high-school English as it is in Texas today.

II. *The Teacher*

Number of teachers.—Two hundred and ten schools report a total of 1,709 high-school teachers employed, or an average of eight to the school. Of these teachers, 290 are doing full-time English work; 49, three-fourths time; 81, half-time; and 16, one-fourth time.

Salary of teachers.—Two hundred and eight English teachers receive a total salary of $251,021 annually, which means an average salary of $1,207. The highest annual salary is $2,400, the lowest is $765.

Preparation of teachers.—The preparation of the teacher of English is to be considered under two headings: (1) academic and professional training; (2) teaching experience.

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[1]For a copy of this questionnaire see pp. 27–29.

(1) *Academic and Professional Training*

High-school preparation.—The women teachers of English outnumber the men teachers of this subject a little more than four to one. To be exact, of the 214 teachers answering the questionnaire, 175 are women and 39 are men. Thirty-three of the men and 143 of the women had attended high school as much as four years. The remainder, out of the numbers previously quoted, had attended a less number of years. The average high school attendance of the men was 3.84 years; of the women, 3.77 years.

Teachers' college.—Eighty-two of the 175 women and twenty of the 39 men attended a teacher-training college. Of these, 82 women, a fraction over one-half, attended as many as four years; none of the men had attended more than three years.

The following table indicates the number of years attended by both men and women:

TABLE I

Years in Teachers' College

Years	1	2	3	4
Women	14	38	13	8
Men	5	12	3	0

The average attendance for the women was 2.61 years; for the men, 1.90 years.

University preparation.—Twenty-four of the 175 women and 6 of the 39 men had not attended any university. Fourteen of the women and 8 of the men had had more than fours years' university training.

TABLE II

University Training

Years	1	2	3	4	More Than Four Years
Women	17	22	20	74	14
Men	2	9	5	10	8

The average attendance for the women was 2.84 years; for the men, 3 years.

Certification.—One hundred and forty-nine of the 214 teachers have permanent certificates and 52 have first-grade. One hundred and thirty of the 214 have a degree.

Further preparation.—Out of 214 teachers, 184 have taken general education courses. One hundred and forty-one have taken special courses in the teaching of English. Thirty-one of the 39 men and 101 of the 175 women majored in English.

Teachers' college training versus university training—One hundred and eight teachers who had attended both a teachers' college and a university replied to the question whether a teachers' college or a university training is better for prospective teachers of English. Forty of this number said that the training received in a teachers' college had enabled them to become more efficient teachers of composition; twenty-nine stated that the university had given them better professional training in this subject. Twenty-seven teachers replied that the teachers' college gives superior instruction in how to teach literature. On the other hand, 43 reported in favor of the university. For composition and literature, the teachers' college received 67 votes in its favor, whereas the university received 72 votes.

The teachers' college has "a more professional atmosphere," says one who has had training in both institutions of learning. "Teachers are taught details with the express purpose of teaching;" "the teachers' college is more definite on problems, the university too broad in scope"; "fundamentals are stressed more"; "advanced classes are smaller and the prospective teachers are given more individual instruction." These are some of the other reasons advanced in favor of the teachers' college.

Those who believe that university training is superior for students who expect to become teachers of English, say so on the grounds that "university professors are, on the whole, better trained than those in teachers' colleges"; "the subjects are studied more intensively"; "the standards are

higher, the courses are better planned"; "the libraries are larger and offer greater opportunity to do research work"; "appreciation of literature is stressed more than in a teachers' college."

(2) *Teaching Experience*

The second most valuable factor in the training of a teacher is his or her experience in the schoolroom. Since many high-school teachers have had previous experience in the grades, it seems advisable to give the figures for this training also. The 22.8 teachers reporting on this phase of the questionnaire have had an average total teaching experience of 6.8 years each. One hundred and eighty-seven women had taught 1205 years, or an average of 6.4 years each. Forty-one men had taught 348 years, or an average of 8.5 years each. One hundred and eighty-seven women taught high-school English 780 years, or an average of 4 years each; 41 men had taught high-school English 225 years, or an average of 5.5 years each. The average grade experience for the women is 2.4 years; for the men, 3 years. For the women the average number of years in the present position is 2.7; for the men, 2.9.

TABLE III

Years' Teaching Experience of English Teachers

Years' Teaching Experience	Women	Men
1-3	65	16
4-6	57	7
7-10	38	7
11-15	11	4
16-25	12	5
26-31	4	2
Total number of teachers		228
Average years' experience		4

TABLE IV

Experience as Teachers of High-School English

Years' Teaching Experience	Women	Men
1-3	108	20
4-6	49	10
7-10	21	7
11-15	4	0
16-25	5	3
26-31	0	1

Total number of teachers	228
Average years experience	4

Work of the teacher of English.—Out of 187 women teachers and 44 men teachers, 94 women and 21 men teach English only. The minimum number of English classes taught by the women is found to be 2 a day; by the men, 1 a day. Fourteen women and four men have 6 to 8 classes a day, including English. The women teach English an average of 4.10 periods a day; the men teach it exactly 4 periods.

TABLE V

Periods of High-School Work Taught Daily by the Teacher of English

English Classes	1	2	3	4	5	6	More than 6
Women	2	11	33	58	59	10	14
Men	1	1	9	15	13	1	4
Total	3	12	42	73	72	11	18

Of the 710 English classes reported by the women teachers, 56 had an enrollment of 10 or less; by the men, 22, and 5 (4 women and 1 man) had an enrollment of more than 45. The average enrollment of the English classes taught by the women is 22.06; that of the men, 20.35.

TABLE VI

Enrollment Per Class in High-School English

Enrollment	1-10	11-15	16-25	26-35	36-45	Above 45
Women	56	91	335	168	19	4
Men	22	5	75	37	6	1
Total	78	96	410	205	25	5

Ten men and 43 women report they do not have time for conference with the pupils. The average number of conference periods is 5½ a week.

TABLE VII

Conference Periods Per Week

Periods	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Above 6
Women	43	15	13	7	4	57	5	29
Men	10	3	2	5	1	9	0	5
Total	53	18	15	12	5	66	5	34

Study hall and other duties.—The average number of study hall periods each week for the women is 6.16; the average number for the men is 5.68.

TABLE VIII

Study Hall Duty

Periods	0	1	2	3	4	5	Over 6
Women	38	3	3	6	2	57	63
Men	14	1	2	0	1	9	14
Total	52	4	5	6	3	66	77

Other school duties.—In addition to teaching, 158 teachers state that they voluntarily or involuntarily shoulder other school activities. Forty-two are athletic coaches, 37 are sponsors for the high-school literary society, 24 are supervisors, 17 have charge of the debating and dramatic club work, 13 direct the student publications, 7 direct the choral

work or orchestra, 5 are high-school principals, 4 are workers in the P.T.A., 3 are librarians, 3 have charge of the Interscholastic League work, 2 are superintendents, and 1 is a matron of a dormitory. If each teacher had only one of these activities to look after, the work would be heavy enough, but a number of teachers state that they are responsible for as many as two or three of these extra-curricula activities.

With so much of the time taken up in the classroom and in supervising athletics, societies, etc., the teacher spends an average of three hours a day outside of school in the preparation of the work for the next day, including theme reading and correcting. It is small wonder, then, that "the conscientious teacher," to quote the Fredericksburg teacher of English, "has no time for private reading of magazines or current fiction, nor for study along literary lines."

In reply to the question, Do teachers of other subjects coöperate to the extent that they correct errors in the mechanics of English? 160 answered "yes"; 30 said "some do," and 18 stated "not much."

III. *Course of Study*

English required for graduation.—Of the 200 schools replying to the question relative to the number of years of English required for graduation, 166 state that they offer four years; 34, three years; 4, two years; and 3, one year. While there are a few four-year schools which make the fourth year elective (the exact number is not known at present), on the whole practically every school of this class in the State prescribes four years.

Literature... (1) *Periods devoted to classics.*—The number of periods a week devoted to the study of classics ranges from 1 to 4. As will be seen from the following table, however, 98 to 139 out of 214 schools give two-fifths of the time to the classics.

TABLE IX

Periods Devoted to Classics

	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade
No. Schools	18-139-29-1	16-138-32-1	6-98-75-8	6-99-76-6
No. Periods	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

(2) *Classics studied.*—A tabulation of the classics studied in 200 high schools indicates the fact that they are endeavoring to adhere to the suggestions made in the State course of study. The six most commonly used classics (the figures in parenthesis indicate the number of times each book was reported) are: *Julius Caesar* (126), *Macbeth* (111), *Silas Marner* (109), *Merchant of Venice* (104), *Ancient Mariner* (92), *Sketch Book* (85). The following list will give the classics most frequently used in a specific grade, also the total number of times they appear in the three other high-school years:

TABLE XI

Frequency of Classics Studied

Classic	Eighth	Other Grades
Treasure Island	85	87
Merchant of Venice	84	104
Lady of the Lake	69	82
Enoch Arden	59	68
Sketch Book	52	85
Midsummer Night's Dream	33	59

Classic	Ninth	Other Grades
Julius Caesar	87	126
Silas Marner	74	109
Ancient Mariner	63	92
As You Like It	47	80
Vision of Sir Launfel	45	61
Tale of Two Cities	37	69

Classic	Tenth	Other Grades
Macbeth	59	111
American Literary Readings	56	66
House of the Seven Gables	39	56
Romeo and Juliet	38	43
Emerson's Essays	37	39
Franklin's Autobiography	28	43

Classic	Eleventh	Other Grades
Hamlet	65	84
Macbeth	45	111
Essay on Burns	39	45
Sesame and Lilies	33	36
Tempest	32	37
Twelve Centuries	30	35

(3) *History of English and American literature.*—While the majority of high schools think that the history of American literature and the American classics should precede the history of English literature and the English classics, chiefly because the former is the less difficult of the two for a pupil of 15 or 16 years, a few schools offering history still emphasize the English literature in the tenth because of its correlation with the history. English history, however, is slowly being dropped from the smaller schools, and replaced by American history in the tenth, and civics and economics in the eleventh. This is causing even the smaller high schools that do place the American literature in the eleventh to reverse the order. Out of the 214 schools replying to the question concerning the grades in which the two histories of literature are stressed, 191 place the history of American literature in the tenth grade, 6 in the eleventh grade, 6 in the ninth, and 2 in the eighth. The average number of periods devoted each week to the history of literature is 2, whether it be American in the tenth or English in the eleventh.

(4) *Home Reading.*—The number of classics the pupils are able to read outside of class each year varies from four to ten. The average is three each semester.

Fifty-two out of 203 teachers prescribe the classics to be read, 41 teachers prescribe a few and allow the pupils to elect the others, while 110 teachers allow the pupil to elect, with some supervision, everything he reads for home credit.

One hundred and eighty-nine books are prescribed for home reading by 93 teachers. The following table gives the six books most often prescribed in a particular grade and their frequency in the other grades:

TABLE XII

Frequency of Books Read

Book	Eighth	Other Grades	Book	Ninth	Other Grades
Call of the Wild...	23	1	Silas Marner	12	2
Treasure Island...	16	0	Lorna Doone	14	10
Tom Sawyer.....	15	0	Ben Hur	13	8
Last of the Mohicans	9	10	Last Days of Pompei	13	3
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm	11	0	Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde	15	2
Man Without a Country	8	1	Little Minister.....	10	2

Book	Tenth	Other Grades	Book	Eleventh	Other Grades
Scarlet Letter.....	15	2	Price and Prejudice	19	3
House of Seven Gables	8	6	Adam Bede	10	1
Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come..	8	2	The Crisis	12	2
Henry Esmond ...	15	0	School for Scandal.	16	0
Mill on the Floss..	8	0	Cranford	9	0
Romona	8	0	Life of Johnson...	10	4

(5) *Restrictions on elected home reading.*—In many of the schools in which the libraries are sufficiently large to permit the pupils to elect a part or all of their home reading, about the only requirement made is that the book must be approved by the teacher. Some teachers insist that the pupils read a certain number of classics from each type of literature suggested by the State Department of Education.

"Sometimes," writes the teacher of English at Carr-Burdette Academy, "I select the reading best adapted to the individual." In the Dallas schools the requirement is "one non-fiction and two or three works of fiction each term." A teacher in an East Texas school urges the pupils to choose books helpful in other courses. "At least one non-fiction" is required in one school, while another permits "only one book of fiction." "I limit to certain authors," writes another teacher. Apparently only one teacher gives her pupils free rein in the field of literature, for, in reply to the question, "What restrictions do you place upon the pupil's reading?" her laconic reply is "Not any."

(6) *Methods of checking up on home reading.*—In checking up on the home reading, almost ninety per cent of the teachers require written or oral reports. These take the form of themes, summaries, outlines, texts, conferences, and round-table discussions. Some go more into detail in their requirements by having the pupils dramatize certain scenes, write a series of advertisements, or make a number of posters for the book read. Book reports following outlines furnished by the teacher or those published by book companies seem to be the favorite method of checking up. Royster's, Collins', and Heydrick's book-forms are the printed ones most used. Some teachers check against duplication by putting on the permanent record-sheet the books read in class and at home.

(7) *The point system.*—Not more than 5 out of 200 teachers mentioned giving points for the books elected. The teacher at Lorena writes: "Each book is given a value in points. *Tom Sawyer* deserves 10 when read in the eighth grade; *Jane Eyre,* 20, when read in the eleventh. Each pupil reads enough books to make 100 points for home reading during the year." Those who use this system find that the pupils do not mind reading non-fiction and the heavier fiction if greater credit is given for this class of literature than for the lighter works.

Grammar.—Grammar in the high school is stressed by 71 teachers in the eighth and ninth grades. Fifty teachers

say that they teach it throughout the high school. Thirty-seven teach it in the eighth grade only, and two state that they do not teach it at all.

TABLE XIII

Frequency of Grammar in the High School

Grades	Frequency
Seventh and eighth	11
Eighth	37
Eighth and ninth	71
Eighth, ninth, and tenth	12
Eighth, ninth, and eleventh	6
Eighth and eleventh	9
Eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh	50
Ninth	2
Ninth and tenth	6
Tenth and eleventh	2
Eleventh	3

The following table gives another picture of the frequency of grammar in grades seven to eleven:

TABLE XIV

Grades	7	8	9	10	11
Frequency of grammar	11	189	137	69	64

Composition.—The time given to written composition varies greatly. Eighty-nine out of 200 teachers say that they require formal themes bi-weekly throughout the four years; 102 require one theme every week the first two years, and one every other week in the last two. One teacher writes that she has only one theme a month, while another gives one each three weeks. The average length of themes in the eighth grade is 100 words, 100 to 150 in the ninth, 100 to 240 in the tenth, and 100 to 500 in the eleventh. Out of the 200 answers, 171 teachers say that they are able to correct all of the written exercises; 29 state that they cannot. Three-fourths of the teachers find time for conference with the pupils about their themes.

In reply to the question, What per cent of the themes do you base upon the classics? we find that over half of the teachers require from one-fourth to one-half of the themes to be based upon these books. A small number of teachers require from 10 to 75 per cent.

TABLE XV

Themes Based Upon Classics

Teachers	Themes Based upon Classics
One	35 %
Two	12 %
Two	15 %
Two	60 %
Two	66 2/3%
Two	70 %
Three	16 2/3%
Eight	75 %
Nine	30 %
Ten	40 %
Thirteen	10 %
Fourteen	20 %
Twenty-eight	33 1/3%
Forty-one	50 %
Forty-four	25 %
Total number of teachers	182

Eighty-six teachers out of 143 reporting state that they use the number system of grading themes. Forty-eight use numerals, three the curve, and six the Hubbard card. Composition and spelling scales are far from being popular with composition teachers, for some of those who have tried the Hillages or the Harvard-Newton scale state that they are impracticable. Fifteen teachers use the first-named, and twenty-six the latter. The Ayres Spelling Scale is hardly more widely used, there being but 28 out of 200 teachers who are trying it out.

One hundred and eighty-six teachers replied to the question concerning the amount of time given to oral composition.

Seventy-three state that they require oral themes bi-weekly, while eighty-three have such themes weekly. Eight teachers give a small part of every recitation to oral theme work, five give two periods a week; three have one each three weeks, and fourteen have oral theme day only once a month.

Methods used in correcting themes.—The method at least one-third of the teachers use in correcting themes is that of indicating errors by means of symbols and requiring the paper to be revised or rewritten. Fully two-thirds simply place the symbols in the margin without requiring any revision after the errors have been discussed in class or at conference. In a few schools the pupils own or have access to a handbook of writing. The teacher indicates the theme-error by placing in the margin the number of the rule violated. The pupil then looks up the number, makes the correction after studying the rule, and in some instances writes the rule violated underneath the correction. Most of the teachers practicing this last-named method of correction use either Woolley's *Handbook of Composition* or the *Century Handbook of Writing* in the tenth and eleventh grades, and Royster-Thompson's *Guide to Composition* in the eighth and ninth. In the two lower grades, less attention is paid to content than to the mechanics, and *vice versa* in the higher.

One of the most effective methods of correcting themes is that submitted by the teachers at Breckenridge, who say: "We give two grades—one for form, and one for subject matter. Sometimes the pupils re-write the themes; sometimes we have them put their corrections on the board for the benefit of the class; and sometimes the individual corrects his theme with the help of the teacher in the conference period. In addition to this, ten minutes of almost every recitation is given to correcting errors taken from themes."

"Since my pupils," writes the Goldthwaite teacher, "are weak on outlines, I give a separate grade on outlines, a grade for form, and a grade for content, then a final average grade. If the average is not higher than B—, the

theme must be rewritten according to corrections indicated. Glaring errors, such as *have went,* etc., are marked, and grades cut as I see fit, proportional to pupil and previous corrections."

From Clyde comes the reminder that all themes should not be graded alike. "In correcting themes, I use Woolley's *Handbook of Composition,* and mark mistakes according to the requirements for that class. For instance, I do not count off for all errors made by an eighth-grade pupil. The further advanced he gets, however, the more errors I indicate, and the more rigidly I grade for violations of the minimum requirements."

Other phases of the course of study.—In reply to the question concerning other phases of the course of study, 61 schools out of 200 have a course in public speaking, 58 have a school paper, 101 have debating clubs, 181 take more or less interest in Interscholastic League work, and 159 observe Better English Week each year.

Greatest weakness in the course of study.—Grammar, according to the report of 110 out of 214 teachers, is the subject in which high-school pupils are the weakest. Fifty-four other teachers say that the weakness is in sentence structure. The remaining number of the 214 say that their pupils are poorest in one or several of the following: oral English, spelling, punctuation, diction, and form. The causes of the weaknesses mentioned above are many. "Lack of training in the lower grades," however, is the charge made by 106 teachers. "Carelessness," "poor home training," "unprepared teachers," come next in frequency. Other reasons given are: "Insufficient written work," "teachers go too fast," "too much rhetoric, not enough practical work," "too many studies," "crowded rural schools," "passing poor students," "complexity of subject," "change of schools," "foreign population," "movie-mad," and "my own fault."

Needed changes in the course of study.—Something like two hundred teachers very kindly made suggestions relative to needed changes in the present high-school course in English. At least fifty per cent of this number are decidedly

convinced that there should be more formal grammar in the high school. The majority of these are of the opinion that the subject should be stressed in the eighth and ninth grades. Others think that the high-school pupil's mind is too immature for formal grammar until he reaches the tenth grade. All are ready, however, to attribute the poor quality of the pupil's English to his inadequate knowledge of the fundamentals of English grammar. For instance, the teacher of English in the Bellevue High School has this to say: "More technical grammar should be taught in the eighth and ninth grades. Pupils in the higher classes cannot understand their mistakes in structure, tense, reference, etc., because they do not know the grammar involved." From Sherwood the teacher writes: "I believe that a regular textbook should be adopted for the teaching of grammar in the eighth grade, and that the first half of the year should be given exclusively to that subject. Then a brief review of grammar in the other grades would be sufficient." "I am strongly in favor," says the teacher at Blossom, "of requiring more thorough work in formal grammar. Pupils I have had are so inefficient that it is a great drawback to their composition and their interpretation of the classics."

But not all of those suggesting "more grammar" believe in placing the burden of the work on the high-school teacher. "Indeed," says the teacher at Fredericksburg, "I am old-fashioned enough to believe that more formal grammar should be taught in the sixth and seventh grades of the elementary schools, so that not so much stress need be laid on grammar in the high school." Practically the same suggestion is made by the Grandview teacher. "There should be stronger English in the grades." "Get the grade schools," suggests a San Antonio teacher, "to lay more stress on the parts of speech, parsing and analyzing, and cut out much of the milk and water stuff in our grammars—then watch for results."

It seems that the next greatest need, as evidenced by the replies received, is a curtailment of the course of study suggested by the State. This has reference particularly

to the number of themes and classics each year. "Too much is required for the average mind to grasp well," says the Port Neches teacher. "I think it best to teach fewer things more intensively and thus be able to give the pupil a good foundation upn which he may be able to build up his knowledge of English by himself if necessary." A teacher in the Baptist Academy at Rusk thinks that "too many classics are required for study. Either they must all be galloped through with a hasty glance, or one or two must be studied thoroughly at the expense of all the others. Indeed, I have never yet gotten through all that are suggested." "Less work more thoroughly done," writes the Lockney teacher, "is a good standard to adhere to until comparatively all common errors are overcome. Then work for speed and lengthy themes." "The present English course is too comprehensive to allow for sufficient thoroughness. Fewer classics should be studied in the class and more individual attention given to the pupils," suggests the teacher at Matador. Practically the same statement comes from Electra, that "the present English course covers too much ground and does not concentrate sufficiently on the essentials. Pupils complain that they do not have time to master one thing until they are rushed on to another." "I think we have," says the Alvarado teacher, "too much written work. Fewer compositions with more effort and study put into them would make for more efficient work." "It seems to me," we quote from the Brenham teacher, "that the present high-school English course has too many aims. It endeavors to instil an appreciation of literature from Chaucer to Conrad, to train the business correspondent, and to develop the four-minute speaker. Yet most of the graduates continue to read Zane Grey and *True Confessions*, answer by telephone, and 'say it with flowers.' Perhaps two distinct English courses—literary and business—would help the situation."

Many other suggestions are offered, all of which are pertinent, for the improvement of the present high-school course in English. Summed up briefly, they are as follows:

"Give more modern literature, the present course is too deadening"; "place more emphasis on the literature itself, rather than upon the history of literature"; "stress oral English, penmanship, and spelling"; "allow a separate credit for grammar"; "devote more time to letter writing"; separate the composition and literature"; "require more time for supervised study and for theme conferences"; "urge all of the teachers to coöperate with the English teacher in improving the written and spoken English"; "plan a separate course in English for the Mexican children"; "limit the number of pupils per teacher to 100"; "let there be more flexibility in the course of study"; "list a greater number of classics to select from"; "require the school boards to pay the English teacher a salary equal to that of any other teacher of the high school, provided the qualifications and experience are the same"; "let there be a list of minimum requirements for each grade, and demand that every pupil know the minimal requirements before he shall pass to a higher grade."

Other worthwhile methods suggested are as follows: "Encourage pupils to discuss characters in the classics as if they were real people"; "socialize the theme work by having pupils write for an audience, such as the lower grades, the Parent-Teachers' Association, the women's Shakespeare Club, etc."; "have 'use your eyes' excursions for theme-writing"; "try Hamlet for insanity, Lady Macbeth for murder, Uriah Heep for fraudulency"; "assign theme subjects which entail interviews with old settlers or which arouse an interest in local customs, industries, and traditions"; "have addresses by leading business men on the necessity for studying English"; "require the pupil to make an outline of a lecture, later reproducing it orally and adding his own opinion of the lecture"; "require each grade to give, once a month, a program in chapel"; write letters to pupils of the same grade in other states and English-speaking countries"; "stress extempore and prepared speeches, public announcements, after-dinner speeches, introduction of speakers"; "organize Better-English clubs; ob-

serve Better-English Week; and have contests to see which pupils use the best language"; "teach the general details of literature only so far as they affect the classics studied and will throw light and enjoyment on it; stress the human side of the author, link the literature up with the pupil's experiences"; "let the pupils give special programs on the authors studied"; "have an occasional debate on some topic of the day"; "for research work, use the package library at the State University"; "encourage practice teaching on the part of the pupils, grading this effort as closely as you would any other undertaking"; "correlate history and geography with the composition and literature"; "devote one day out of the week to a discussion of the pupils' outside reading"; "give an occasional 'true-false' test"; "assign term themes on the birds, trees, flowers, etc., of the locality"; "award 'book certificates' for outside reading"; "permit the pupils to illustrate themes, no matter how crude the drawings"; "make a practical application of the numerous inspirational thoughts in literature"; "use the bulletin board for posters, displaying unusually good work, and all announcements"; "arouse an interest in current history and literature"; "give additional points for all memory work over the minimal requirements"; "allow the better qualified 'Big Brothers' and 'Big Sisters' to supervise the work in the lower grades."

In addition to the concisely stated methods listed above, a few of the replies to the request for methods used are given in full: "The project method," says the academy teacher of English at Clarendon College, "is the most satisfactory. For instance, each member of the class is given a current topic for a package library or a scrapbook containing comment on contemporary writers; or the English literature class gives a pageant showing the Canterbury pilgrimage."

From Rochelle comes a message that leaves no doubt about the kind of work being done in that school. Speaking of the work in English, the teacher says, "I love it, think it, feel it, and somehow I find my own love for it reflected in

the bright faces and thoughtful eyes of my pupils." The same spirit is reflected in the report from St. Xavier's Academy: "I try to vitalize my work by having myself well-prepared lessons and tons of enthusiasm." The Roby teacher writes: "I try to make a fresh start every year so that the work will be fascinating and interesting; to make as minimum essentials that which will seriously embarrass, and to insist that every pupil know and put into practice these essentials; to make notes of phrases that pupils should be warned against; to supervise study and hold individual conferences; to make proficiency seem worthwhile, and to develop self-criticism on the part of *all* pupils."

The teacher at Sherwood, who says he uses the socialized recitation to good advantage, suggests a novel plan to arouse class interest. "In the eighth grade, especially, review drills are carried on as follows: The teacher asks the first question. The pupil answering this question asks a question of some other pupil, and so on. A pupil has the right to object to a question that is poorly stated, and to require the questioner to re-state his question."

To vitalize the theme work, the teacher in San Antonio Academy gives this most excellent method: "Create rivalry and interest," he writes; "read the best themes in class before handing them back, always withholding the names. Make encouraging remarks, get the class to take up a discussion of some of the features of the different themes read, exhibit the faults fully, but never ridicule. Kind criticism is the greatest possible incentive to get the pupils to write interestingly. I aim at the simple, same old things that were spoken of on previous occasions, and which are going to be reiterated in the coming weeks. This produces, as a rule, better results than private conferences, because the open discussion has a more stimulating effect on the class and awakens the dormant ambition of each one individually."

V. *Equipment*

General equipment.—Special equipment for the English room is noticeably lacking in more than half of the schools

Only about 98 out of 200 teachers reporting have a room used exclusively for English. Twenty-eight have reading tables. Ninety-eight do not have bookcases, and must go to the inconvenience of seeking the general library every time a book is wanted for the least reference. Seventy-six are provided with a filing-case for themes. One hundred have a special bulletin-board for English. Ninety-one have a few records pertaining to the English work, but the Victrola is the common property of all the teachers. One-fourth of the teachers have the privilege of using a stereopticon and a mimeograph owned by the school.

Library.—The largest number of library books used exclusively for English is 1,561. The smallest number is 20. Fifty-five out of the 200 schools failed to give the size of the English division of the library. Half of the 200 schools reporting do not use any system of cataloguing the library books. Sixty-seven use the subject-author card system, and thirty-three use the Dewey decimal system.

From a survey of 120 high-school libraries, it was found that twenty-six of this number do not have any periodicals or professional books and magazines. Nine have professional reading but no periodicals, and twenty have periodicals but no professional reading. Of the 82 periodicals listed, we find that the *Literary Digest* (64), *Review of Reviews* (31), *American* (19), *Pathfinder* (12), *Current Events* (10), *National Geographic* (23), *Outlook* (9), *Scientific American* (12), head the list in popularity. These, however, are used in connection with the regular classwork in history and English. Next in popularity are *Harper's Magazine* (8), *Scribner's* (8), *Current Opinion* (7), *Popular Science Monthly* (9), and *Current History* (8). The figures in parenthesis denote the frequency.

Magazines and books of a professional nature are to be found in the libraries of 76 out of 120 schools. The *English Journal* leads the list in popularity, it being mentioned 21 times. The *Texas Outlook* (15), *Correct English* (7), *The Texas School Journal* (6), *Popular Education* (4), and *Educational Review* (4) are next in frequency. Of the

professional books, Thomas' *Teaching of English* is found in 12 libraries; Carpenter, Baker and Scott's *Teaching of English* in 7, Chubb's *Teaching of English* in 6, Bolenius' *Teaching of Literature* in 6.

VI. *Recommendations*

Following this study of *The Teaching of High School English in Texas,* the writer would make several recommendations relative to this subject: (1) That the salary of the English teachers be equal to that of any other teacher in high school with similar qualifications; (2) that all degree teachers spend one out of every three summers in travel or study, all non-degree teachers every other summer; (2) that professional interest and continuous service be rewarded by an annual increase in salary, and, if possible, by a promotion; (4) that every teacher of English be provided with equipment and a room to be used exclusively for English; (5)that the English room be made a literary studio by being provided with bookcases well filled with books for immediate use, a reading table on which are placed choice magazines, filing cabinets for themes, maps of England, America, and Europe, a bulletin-board, stereopticon, Victrola, a few attractive pictures for wall decoration, and one or two appropriate casts; (6) that the school board set aside a certain sum each year for the purchase of professional books and magazines, collateral reading, reference works, etc.; (7) that extensive collateral reading lists with an appeal in them for every pupil be prepared; (8) that more emphasis be placed upon the fundamentals of English, such as spelling, penmanship, form, grammar, and sentence structure; (9) that a list of minimal essentials be prepared for each subject, and that no pupil be passed to a higher grade who does not make a final grade of 80 on these essentials; (10) that certain minimal essentials of formal grammar be taught functionally throughout the four years; (12) that all errors within the pupil's knowledge be indicated and the pupil required to make a written correction of each error; (13) that each class be required to

write at least once each week a sentence or a paragraph theme which shall be corrected in class; (14) that not more than 20 per cent of the themes be based on the classics read; (15) that, as much as possible, theme material be secured from experience and observation; (16) that all forms of letter-writing be emphasized; (17) that one period of literature, one phase of composition or grammar, and all of one classic be studied until it is completed; (18) that in all oral work special emphasis be placed upon enunciation, self-expression, and extemporaneous speaking.

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[Below we print a copy of the questionnaire which Miss Sterrett sent to the teachers of English in the high schools of Texas.—EDITORS.]

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE TEACHING OF HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH IN TEXAS*

General information.—School.....; enrollment..... Population of town..... Number of high-school teachers.....; number of teachers devoting full time to English.....; three-fourths of time.....; half time.....

Salary of teachers.—Salary of English teachers.....; salary of science teachers.....

Preparation of teachers.—(1) *Academic and professional:* Number of years in high school.....; in normal school.....; in college of university.....; certificate.....; degree..... Number general education courses.....; number of special courses on methods of etaching English.....; major subject in college.....; minor subjects..... If a student in both a teachers' college and a university, which training enabled you to become a better teacher of composition?.....; of literature? .....; why?.....

(2) *Teaching experience:* Total teaching experience.....; number years in elementary grades.....; number years as teacher of high-school English.....; number years in present position.....

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*Form not original. The writer wishes to acknowledge her indebtedness to the following articles for much assistance in the preparation of her questionnaire on *The Teaching of High-School English in Texas:* Lucian G. Hickman's "The Teaching of Composition and Literature in the High Schools of Indiana," *English Journal*, Vol. X, pp. 142-152; Robert Adger Law's "A Questionnaire for English Teachers in Texas," *University of Texas Bulletin*, 1917, pp. 39-41; Robert Adger Law's *English Teaching in Texas*, 1917, pp. 5-10; Cecile B. McCrosky's "The Administration of English in the High School Curriculum," *English Journal*, Vol VII, pp. 108-117; W. M. Smith's "The Equipment of Teaching English in the High School," *Illinois Association of Teachers of English Bulletin*, Vol. VIII, No 3, pp. 3-9.

Work of the teacher.—Periods devoted to teaching of English .....; number enrolled in each class taught.....; other subjects taught and number enrolled.....; number conference periods each week.....; number supervised study hall periods each week.....; other school duties (athletic coach, sponsor for literary society, etc.).....; average time spent on preparation of daily lessons (including themes)..... Do teachers of other subjects coöperate to the extent that they correct errors in the mechanics of English?.....

Course of study. (1) *Literature:* Number of years in English required for graduation.....; number periods each week devoted to the study of classics in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades..... List classics studied in class, in each of the four years .....
.....
State grade in which you stress American literature.....; grade in which you stress English literature.....; number of periods devoted each week to the history of literature.....; average number of classics pupils are able to read outside of class each year ..... Do you prescribe the books to be read outside of class, or do you allow the pupil to elect from a somewhat lengthy list? ..... If the former course is followed, mention the books prescribed for each year.....
.....
If the elective course is followed, what restrictions do you place upon his reading?..... State method of checking up on collateral or home reading.....

(2) *Composition:* In what grade or grades do you teach formal grammar?..... How frequently do you require written compositions?..... Oral compositions?..... Average length of each..... Are you able to correct all written exercises?..... Do you have time for personal conferences with your pupils?..... What percentage of compositions are based on the classics?..... In what phase of English do you find your pupils weakest?..... How do you account for the weakness?.....
.....

Other phases of the course of study.—Do you have a course in public speaking?..... Does your school publish a school paper? ..... How many debating clubs?..... Do your pupils take an active part in Interscholastic League work?..... Do you observe Better English Week each year?..... What foreign languages are taught in your school?..... On the whole which are the better pupils in English, those taking the foreign language course or those taking the science course?.....

General equipment.—Do you have: (1) A room used exclusively for English?..... Reading tables in English room?..... Book

cases?..... Filing case for themes?..... Wall maps and charts?..... Bulletin board?..... Mimeograph?..... Stereopticon, curtain, and slides?..... Pictures used with work taught at various times?..... Victrola and education records? .....

Library equipment.—Is there a special room for the library?..... Is the library open during the day for reading and for reference? ..... State size of the library..... State number volumes in the English division.....; amount of money spent annually on books..... Underscore each of the following that you have in your library: unabridged dictionary, encyclopedia, handbook of mythology and fiction, dictionary of synonyms, etymological dictionary, one anthology for every three pupils in American and English literature. Gives names of periodicals in library.....

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What system of cataloguing do you use?..... Underscore any of the following magazines used in the teaching of English: *Review of Reviews, Independent, Current Opinion, Literary Digest.* What professional books and magazines do you have in your library.....

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Methods.—What system of grading do you use?..... Underscore any of the following scales used, and tell whether or not you consider them reliable: Ayres Spelling Scale, Harvard-Newton English Composition Scale, Hillegas Composition Scale.....

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State the method you use in correcting themes.....

.....

Name briefly some of the methods you use to vitalize your work:

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Needed changes.—Suggest needed changes in the present high-school course in English. Be as frank as you please, for we want your ideas.....

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JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE*

By L. W. Payne, Jr.

Professor of English, University of Texas

The junior and senior high schools are usually organized on the two-four or the three-three basis. In most of the states the public school course is organized on the twelve-grade system, and in this system the junior high school is usually composed of the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, while the senior high has the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. In Texas, however, the public school course is on the eleven-grade system, and under this system we have usually organized the junior and senior high school grades on the two-three system, but in some cases, as here in San Antonio, the sixth grade has been included in the junior high school, thus making the three-three system as in the schools where twelve grades form the basis of the public schools. Since the seventh grade is usually the first year of the junior high school in most of the states, I shall predicate what I have to say on "Literature in the Junior High School" on the seventh grade as the norm, assuming that the other grades of the junior high school, whatever its organization, must largely follow the norm set by the seventh grade.

The child in the seventh grade is usually in his eleventh or twelfth year. This means that he is in the pre-adolescent stage or else just merging into the adolescent stage. I am assuming that the training in formal English, such as grammar, spelling, composition, spoken English, shall be taken care of in periods set apart for particular work in these technical elements of English. I am assuming, also, that from three to five periods of forty minutes each shall be devoted to the study of literature throughout the junior

*Paper read before the English Section at the State Teachers' Association, San Antonio, Nov. 28, 1924.

high school. As much as I am interested in the formal elements of English and as important as I think those elements are, I shall naturally in this paper have to omit all reference to them.

It is in the junior high school grades that the pupil first reaches the stage where he can begin to feel and to judge consciously the literary values in any given piece of writing. Before the age of 11 or 12 the child reacts to certain types of literature, to be sure, but his reactions are more or less unconscious or spontaneous. He rarely or never formulates any reasons for his likes or dislikes. At the ages of 11 or 12, however, he begins to ask himself just why a poem or story appeals to him or is a good one. In other words, he is now approaching the stage where conscious criticism of art forms begins to dawn upon him. Before this time, for example, he may have committed to memory a number of poetic selections, but he has done it more or less as he committed to memory the multiplication table, namely, because he was told that it was necessary for him to do so. Now he begins to find selections which he likes so well that he will frequently voluntarily say that he wants to memorize this or that. This means that his literary consciousness is being definitely aroused and is taking shape as a part of his mental equipment.

The first general aim of the teacher of the seventh grade literature, then, should be to arouse and direct the child's conscious sense of literary values. This involves, of course, a great deal more than mere personal preferences for this or that type of writing. It means in a broad general sense that the child's emotional and imaginative faculties must be aroused, his esthetic nature quickened, and his ethical sense developed, and that his ideals of life and conduct must be evolved largely from the literature which is placed before him. It also means that the child must begin to understand, at least in an elementary way, the technical or literary devices by which these larger effects in his emotional, imaginative, esthetic, and ethical experiences are wrought out. In other words, he must have the simpler elements of literary criticism presented to him, even thus early in the course.

He must not only be taught to admire that particular type of literature which the world has chosen to call classic or excellent, but he must be taught why this type of literary work is excellent. I am not a stickler for the teaching of formal matters of technique in verse or prose, particularly in the earlier grades of the junior high school, but I do believe that the time to call attention to certain simple technical matters is just at that moment when the pupil's interest is at white heat because of his own pleasure in the effects of a given selection or a definite passage. For example, I think it is wise to call attention, at least incidentally, to the rhythm, the melody, the atmosphere, the salient details or concrete instances, the local color, the subtle effects of figurative language, the connotative associations of certain words and phrases and allusions, the economy of diction, the balance and proportion of parts, the use of irony and suspense and climax, and similar matters as they arise in the study of the masterpieces from day to day. Even simple elements of verse technique would not be out of place in studying a poem, particularly if there is to be a memory passage chosen from the poem. Frequently a simple exposition of the verse technique will arouse additional interest and aid the pupils in their oral reading, and especially in their work in committing passages to memory. Of course I should not advise the introduction of the names of the rhythms and the meters and rhyme schemes at this early stage, but inasmuch as the child reads poetry more or less naturally in a rhythmic or sing-song fashion, and inasuch as he is now far enough advanced to react spontaneously and favorably to a simple exposition of the facts of rhythm and melody as illustrated in the different movements and cadences and in the subtler effects of rime, alliteration, onomatopeia, syzygy, and the like, I should certainly not neglect the opportunity of presenting these technical facts in an informal way. I recall that on one occasion I was teaching a selection from "Hiawatha" to a seventh-grade class, and the children were having considerable difficulty in pronouncing the Indian proper names introduced so frequently in the poem. I said nothing about

trochaic tetrameter or the octosyllabic trochaic rhythm of the *Kalevala,* but I did illustrate the rhythm of "Hiawatha" by reading passages in exaggerated rhythmic form and by showing the children that there were eight syllables in every line, the odd syllables being normally accented and the even syllables unaccented. By this simple device they soon learned not only to pronounce the unfamiliar Indian names, but also to read the poem in a better rhythmic style and to find increased delight in the regular trochaic movement of the verse.

"And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Ceased his chatter in the oak-tree,
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,
Sat upright to look and listen.
Yes, the brook, the Sebowisha,
Pausing, said, 'O Chibiabos,
Teach my waves to flow in music,
Softly as your words in singing!'
Yes, the bluebird, the Owaissa,
Envious, said, 'O Chibiabos,
Teach me tones as wild and wayward,
Teach me songs as full of frenzy!'
Yes, the robin, the Opechee,
Joyous, said, 'O Chibiabos,
Teach me tones as sweet and tender,
Teach me songs as full of gladness.'
And the whippoorwill, Wawonaissa,
Sobbing, said, 'O Chibiabos,
Teach me tones as melancholy,
Teach me songs as full of sadness!' "

But all these matters should be incidental and subordinate to the larger aim, which is to train and stimulate the child's imaginative, emotional, esthetic, and ethical nature. Along with this primary aim the teacher should always have before him this secondary aim, namely, to develop what we may call the literary reading habit. What I mean by the literary reading habit is not merely the daily dip into the newspapers, or the weekly dip into the *Youth's Companion* or the *Saturday Evening Post,* or the *Literary*

Digest (I sometimes call it the "Literary Indigestion"), but the habit of concentrated reading in the solider type of books in pure literature, such as the better short stories, the novels, the longer stories and romances, histories, biolraphies, essays, poetry, and drama. If we can only teach our children really to enjoy, not merely to tolerate, good literature, if we can inspire our pupils to read more and better literature and to read this literature with a fairer degree of appreciation and intelligence, we shall have fulfilled our function. The teacher of junior high-school English who does not inspire his pupils to read more than the classroom assignments and who does not teach them to read more accurately and more intelligently, is, in my judgment, a failure, no matter what other accomplishments he may have as a teacher.

The choice of material for the junior high-school course in literature should be based largely on the child's chief interests at the age represented by his grade. Primarily, of course, the child at the age of the seventh grade is interested in adventure, strange and supernatural (not amatory) romance, heroic action, and new and strange settings. Narrative prose and verse necessarily bulks large in this sort of literature. The great staple, then, is stories of one kind or another. But the teacher must inject material of other types from time to time, such as the pure lyric, the thoughtful essay, the short oration, and general expository matter. Simple history and biography may also be profitably injected along with the longer fictitious narratives.

If I should be asked to make a general table of contents for a junior high-school reader for the seventh grade, I should recommend some six or seven general divisions with ample material under each rubric. First, under the head of "Adventure," I should expect material dealing with the discovery of new worlds, stories of pioneers, heroes of exploration and settlement, and general stories of adventure in various parts of the world. There is a vast amount of first-rate material in this field, all the way from Columbus to Henry M. Stanley, and from Marco Polo to Daniel Boone and the "Covered Wagon" heroes.

Second, I should select at least two special poets and one or two special short-story writers for more extended study, and for the seventh grade I think I should select Longfellow and Holmes and Hawthorne. The two poets have a large amount of simple narrative verse, and each of them has a special appeal to young people either through work directly addressed to the young or because of the simple moral and the genially humorous tone of their work. Hawthorne is particularly adapted to the seventh grade in his simpler books, such as *Grandfather's Chair, Tanglewood Tales, The Wonderbook,* and in such stories as "The Great Stone Face," "David Swan," "The Snow Image," and the like. Along with Hawthorne I should place a number of additional stories by other writers, a large number of which are also suitable for this grade. Scott, for example, in his *Stories of a Grandfather,* and perhaps Irving, though his work might well be saved for the eighth grade. I should certainly try to work in in some way a few of Kipling's animal stories, a bear story or two by Charles Major, and perhaps a longer narrative like *Treasure Island* or *Captains Courageous.* In connection with the three or four authors chosen for special emphasis, a small amount of literary biography and literary history should be introduced incidentally. Children are always delighted to learn the minuter details, particularly the youth or earlier periods of the lives of the authors whose works they have become more intimately interested in.

My third and fourth general rubrics are closely related, and yet each covers a field wide enough and distinct enough to give a separate division. They are "Folk Tales and Fairy Stories" and "Heroes and Hero Myths and Legends." I should like to see a well-selected group of the older folk tales, and some modern versions, perhaps, from our own and other languages. Fairy tales are a perfect delight to younger children, and I really think that even the most modern and sophisticated of our seventh and eighth grade children still enjoy a good fairy tale. So I would certainly include a few of the more highly allegorical or symbolic

fairy tales, such as some of those written by Joel Chandler Harris and Frank R. Stockton; and Ruskin's well known allegorical fairy tale, "The King of the Golden River," should by no means be omitted. Under the hero myths and legends would fall the modernized versions of the old classic myths, such as those of Hawthorne and Kingsley. Some specific legendary hero might be taken up and followed rather more at length in both story and song, such, for example, as Robin Hood, Theseus, King Arthur. This is the kind of material that the seventh-grade boy or girl always delights in, and it is well to make ample provision for storing their young minds with such legendary and mythical lore at this time. I regret that in my own school training I got very little of this sort of material, and I think that I was robbed of a great deal of the delight which I see my own children getting as they pursue these heroes through the various books and stories they are reading in the present-day schools.

These two sections lead naturally into my fifth general division, namely, "Stories from Great Books or World Masterpieces." Very properly, I think, fairly long passages, or even complete or in some cases condensed versions of such world-famous books as *Arabian Nights, Gulliver's Travels, Robinson Crusoe, Don Quixote,* and the like, might be profitably given in the classroom, and certainly large sections—expurgated as need may determine—of such books should be required for home or outside reading.

Another and a quite different type of material, I think, should be included under some such rubric as "Character and Conduct." Here I should like to see included a group of poems and prose selections which are frankly didactic or moral and ethical in their import. I should not object to the inclusion of the word religious in this last phrase except for the fact that the exact import of the word as I would use it might be misinterpreted. Children of the junior high-school age are forming their life ideals. At this period the religious and moral instincts are highly sensitive, and the teachers must not neglect to take advantage of the

plastic material before them in order to mold it into sane and beautiful forms. We teachers of English have a great responsibility at this point, and under no excuse or circumstance should we allow ourselves to neglect or avoid our plain duty. We might as well face the truth, namely, that it is in the English class that the pupils are to get the training which will mean most to them in the formation of their ideals both in their esthetic and in their ethical and moral life. It is largely to the literature course that we must all look for the final material out of which both ideals and character are made.

One further type of material should also be included, the dramatic. This should be represented by easy short plays, particularly modern plays primarily written for children. In some cases these plays should be actually presented, but more of them should be read in class. "William Tell," by Sheridan Knowles, is a good heroic drama for the seventh or eighth grade. Some adaptations of Shakespeare's easier comedies should also be presented, though it is perhaps better in the seventh grade to present the stories of Shakespeare's plays through the famous *Tales* as prepared by Charles and Mary Lamb.

And now briefly as to the method of presentation. First of all I would say: Determine the general import or meaning of each selection and teach primarily one principal or big idea from that selection. In every work of real artistic merit there is one dominant or central theme or idea. This big idea should be discovered and emphasized. Everything else worth discussing should be subordinate to this big idea. To get this idea over to the pupil, the teacher's skill will be tested in the severest way. Furthermore, if the pupil is to get a full appreciation of the big idea of any given selection, he must be taught to relate the situation or setting or characters and incidents to his own experience and knowledge. This means that the pupil must be induced to make the necessary connotative contribution to the piece of literature, so as to relate it to his present life. In other words, all good literature is universal in its application—that is to say, all great literature is modern in its final

analysis and appeal. This final analysis must be made by the pupil, or else he will fail to comprehend with any degree of fullness or satisfaction what he is reading, and hence he will be unable to record in his own consciousness the necessary emotional and imaginative response. The teacher and the pupil must enter sympathetically and very vividly into the experiences and emotions of the characters presented. The child must hear and see and feel just what the characters in the story hear and see and feel.

Visualization of action and scene and character is absolutely essential to full appreciation of any piece of literary art. Sympathetic, expressive reading is fundamentally dependent upon vivid visualization of both the physical and the emotional and spiritual values involved in the passage under consideration. The teacher must employ every device within his power to make the children see and hear and feel what they read. The function of the teacher is largely to make mere suggestions. He can give examples of good reading himself, and he can offer hints as to salient details and concrete expressions which will set off the springs of the child's imagination, but the child himself must be made to understand that he is to make his own visualizations after all the hints and suggestions are before him. The moving picture does all this for the observer. As some one has said, there never was a story really told until within the last quarter century. With the invention of the cinema we may have the whole story actually visualized for us, even to the color of the hero's eyes and of the heroine's hair. In the literature class the children must be trained to get a moving picture show from the mere printed words. A few devices, such as illustrations and the like, may help, but the real visualization must be made by each individual in the class, out of material within the range of his own experience.

Here I would like to express a warning against overminute analysis and annotation. Give only such notes and helps as well assist the child to get the main ideas. One must be careful not to go so rapidly or to strip the main

ideas so severely as to leave a bare and inadequate interpretation. The child must have a fairly full comprehension of the message of the selection he is studying. On the other hand, a too minute discussion and elaboration of details will lead to a vagueness and haziness and a dissipation of the chief meaning of the selection. In other words, present the main idea with sufficient fullness to make a permanent impression, but do not try to teach everything that can be taught from any given selection. It is better to teach the big ideas in several selections than to spend too much time and drill on a single selection.

The problem of a single basal book or a series of classics for the junior high school course is a difficult one to settle. Under some circumstances, it seems to me, it will be advisable to use separate classics and library assignments. Where the schools are well equipped and manned (or "womanned," shall I say?) and where there is ample and easily accessible library material both for classroom texts and for additional readings, it seems to me that the separate classics would be advisable. In most cases in Texas, however, I think it will be more practical to have a book of selections as the basis of the course, but it will be absolutely necessary to supplement the text with additional classics both for a part of the classwork and for library and home reading. To put all that the children should read in a year in a single volume is to me not only an impractical but an undesirable thing to insist upon. What we want is a good handbook to use as the basis of the course, with model studies of the various types of literature suitable for the grade, and this particularly as a stimulation or a starting point for further reading to be done by the student at home or in the library. As I said earlier in the paper, one of the aims of the English teacher is to make habitual readers, lifelong readers of the pupils. This will be best attained if the children are encouraged and even required to handle and read many books that can only be referred to or partially illustrated in the classroom lessons

from the textbook. After all, the book of selections is but a poor substitute for the real books which the child must become familiar with by actual contact.

EXTRA DIVIDENDS FROM TEACHING AMERICAN LITERATURE

By Miss Rebecca W. Smith

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It is not at all strange that teachers as a class should be conservative in their outlook on life. Since, as Closson says, education is "the conservation of the accumulated wisdom of the past," teachers are both literally and figuratively conservative; and it is natural that they should be slow to part with old ideas or to adopt new ones. But new wisdom and new ways must be introduced from time to time; to do otherwise is to stagnate.

A case in point is the stubbornness with which the old schoolmasters of Colonial and Revolutionary days clung to the belief that Latin, Greek, and other dead languages were the only ones worth studying in schools or colleges, to the utter neglect of systematic training in the vernacular. Benjamin Franklin broke lances with these ultra-conservative pedagogues when in founding an Academy at Philadelphia he insisted that "all should not be compelled to learn Latin, Greek, or the modern foreign languages," but that "the study of English be not neglected since it is absolutely necessary." Thomas Jefferson, also, seemed radical when he wrote into his plans for the University of Virginia the study of Anglo-Saxon in order to "recruit and renovate the vigor of the English language."

The Revolutionary poet, Freneau, proved himself a typical newspaper man when he railed against his old schoolmasters at Princeton as well as all other conservatives in his "Epistle to the Student of Dead Languages."

> "In his own language Homer writ and read,
> North spent his life in poring on the dead;
> Why then your native language not pursue
> In which all ancient sense (that's worth review)
> Glows in translation, fresh and new?"

The battle of Franklin, Jefferson, and Freneau against the neglect of our native tongue in the schools has long since been won, as may be seen in practically every educational institution in the country; for, while the ancient languages are generously offered and excellently taught, they do not usurp the rightful place of English in the curriculum. Yet today pioneers in education are engaged in a very similar struggle against neglect and ultra-conservatism in regard to the establishing of the study of American literature on an equal footing with the study of English literature in schools and colleges. This battle, too, must inevitably be won, but much remains to be done before we shall have realized the complete possibilities and collected the full dividends from the study and particularly the teaching of our national letters.

This new problem is closely related to the first one; in fact, it begins where the other leaves off. We have records that as early as 1825 "English literature" was taught in the academies of the day along with such other "new subjects" as "General History" and "United States History"; but as late as 1884 President Eliot, of Harvard, could truthfully protest that in many high schools of his time no training was being given in reading English literature, and the rest of the high schools gave little attention to it. Eliot's protest and that of other educators led to the formulation of the prescribed list of books known as College Entrance Requirements in English Literature, classics "chosen because of their superior literary qualities or their importance in English literature." Since that time the place of classics in our own tongue has been secure in the schools.

It is extremely difficult to trace the exact beginnings of the study of American literature because of a matter of nomenclature. Through the fortunes of history, the citizens of the United States speak the language of the people of England, borrowed from them in its entirety, and only modified during 300 years; and by virtue of this they have also inherited the magnificent literature of England, all ready-made. However much one may rejoice at the richness and glory of this common heritage, it is permissible

to point out the inaccuracy in nomenclature which the situation brings about. When we have established courses in our schools and colleges in "English Literature" we have not made the proper distinction between books written in the English language and books written in England. Of course, the common language makes possible a continuity and an evolution delightful to the scholar; but there is a difference; there is an American literature which should be discussed and taught as such. Suppose that the study of the history of the United States were offered to our pupils as Course 20 in the History of the English-Speaking Peoples, and the text were often a chapter in the larger story of the British Empire.

However, within the last twenty-five years the definite consideration of the poetry and prose written in this country has forced itself into the curricula of our secondary schools at least, because it so completely fulfils the demands of modern educational reform, and brings the wide-awake teacher an opportunity to get into closer touch with the daily life and interests of all her pupils. At least theoretically the modern high school has come to include American literature in its course of study. At first it was usually for only half a year, but now it is for a full year in the larger and more representative institutions.

In spite of this forward step, however, it is an undeniable truth that in a majority of high schools in the United States today the subject of English literature is better taught than that of American literature. It is stressed more, emphasized more, and given out by the teacher to the pupils with more of the enthusiasm that captures the heart of the child and leads him to love it.

As to why this should be so, two reasons suggest themselves. In the first place, the textbooks for English literature are better than those for the younger branch. Until the last ten or twelve years it was well-nigh impossible to secure a well-balanced text on the whole field of our native letters, not only for secondary schools, but even for advanced students. Such an outstandingly tolerant and inclusive treatment of even one period as Tyler's *History*

of American Literature During the Colonial Time, which surveys all types and sections impartially, has remained conspicuously unique. In the average guide to study, whole fields are ignored while narrow sectional bias has prevailed. To illustrate: In virtually every account of American letters written before 1910 the great New England writers, rightly the most imposing group in our history so far, are treated with such exaggerated enthusiasm that practically the whole discussion is given over to them, to the exclusion of such men as Mark Twain, who is dismissed on a page as an interesting humorist, or Whitman, who is identified as the author of a fine poem about Lincoln! Recall the texts that the large majority of the present teaching personnel of our schools used in their own impressionable years as proof of the statement. This lack of national perspective is being remedied rapidly today; but it is hard to teach old dogs new tricks, and most present-day instructors, having been trained under the old regime, present American masterpieces with little force and enthusiasm because they do not themselves feel any.

Another reason that explains why many conscientious educators are teaching English literature better than they are American—presenting Carlyle better than Emerson, Wordsworth better than Poe, Pepys better than Sewall—is that they actually know the English field better, they are better grounded and prepared in it, because they specialized in it more in the colleges where they were trained. This takes the matter squarely back to the curricula of the universities and colleges, which have been vastly slower than the secondary schools in recognizing in their courses the claims of our native writers. Examine the catalogues of some of our representative institutions as late as 1910. You will find no course in any phase of American literature announced at Princeton, graduate or undergraduate; nor at Stanford; one at Illinois; one at Vassar; two at Vanderbilt, and one at Texas. Ample opportunities for full-year and half-year studies of a single work of Milton, or of Chaucer, detailed consideration of a selected group of

the Romanticists of the nineteenth century; but of the fifteen to fifty items on the academic menu spread before the student for the year's consumption, not one (or painfully few) on the writings of his countrymen for the last 300 years. For that matter, the 1923-1924 catalogue of Princeton still shows none; but the others mentioned, together with nearly all the recognized institutions of higher learning, are gradually increasing their interest in native literature until Princeton is today conspicuous for its indifference. But, again, most present-day teachers were educated under the conditions of ten to fifty years ago, and still bear the marks of their neglect of American themes in their college days.

But, it may be urged, why should the college student give time to native writers when the field of England's masterpieces is so much fuller, so much richer—when it has lofty peaks of achievement beyond anything which this nation can offer as yet? By all means let us grant that the life record of twelve centuries is richer than that of three; we should be more than rash to match the best of our poets against Shakespeare or Chaucer. Let us grant, further, that for the present it seems advisable for the student specializing in literature to devote more time to the larger field of our common language. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that for the eager college student, and for the alive teacher-student, the broader vista and height of the literature of England is fully matched in opportunity and interest by the richer and more untrodden field for original research and investigation in the literature of the United States. It has not yet been "pawed-over"; there is so much left to be explored; there are so many fascinating bypaths that must be mapped before our story can be told. One must no longer of necessity go to Great Britain for material for a master's in English, as one eastern college has been wont to require; one may find a wide range for study and research in the cowboy lyrics of the Southwest, or the mountain folk-lore of Kentucky, or the myriad other phases of our national expression.

An interesting example of the fruits of such out-of-the-way studies is the revival of popular interest in Herman Melville, sailor, novelist, and mystic of the nineteenth century. One may search in vain for a textbook written earlier than 1910 which does more than mention the name of the author of *Moby Dick,* while most of them omit him altogether. It is a pretty fair test of the recency of a text to ascertain whether or not it recognizes the merit of Melville. Yet the popular bookshops nowadays carry in stock beautifully bound copies not only of *Moby Dick,* but of *Omoo, Typee,* and even of *Redburn,* an early effort. For three or four years Melville's name has been on as many lips as the best sellers; and all because a small group of lovers of American literature re-discovered this neighbor and friend of Hawthorne, this transcendental whaler, read him eagerly, and persuaded a publisher to re-issue his novels. At last Melville is about to take his rightful place among his great New England contemporaries, as one of the best of all tellers of sea-tales, as a pioneer in the South Seas, as the acknowledged inspiration of Stevenson and Masefield. Within the last few years thousands of us have hung breathlessly on the magic and weirdness of this chase for the great white whale, this Moby Dick. Through the chaotic gloom of mysticism, and the slaughter of lesser leviathans, through the hodge-podge of salt and philosophy, we have followed, as fascinated as Melville's own Ahab, and as helpless as he to leave off this pursuit of the spirit of Evil until the very end. There is nothing remarkable about the revival; the wonder is that we could have overlooked him so long.

Beside Melville on the bookshelf of any up-to-date bookshop this year one finds the Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, and a volume of her letters. "Emily Dickinson? An American poet?" asks the student who stopped his investigations with the narrow texts of twenty years since. Yes; another revival, in a way. The condensed, pungent verses of this lonely woman have won their way into more hearts in our generation than ever knew her in her own time,

seventy-five years ago. Truly, the field for study along these lines is white for the harvest. What has been done for Crevecouer's *Letters from an American Farmer,* what Professor Emerson is doing for the neglected novelist, Imlay, remains to be done for many another author. Full justice has not yet been accorded the *Autobiography of David Crockett.* Crude as it is, has it not the essential appeal of all tales of action, of Hakluyt's Voyages, of Captain John Smith's *True Relation,* and all narratives that are written with the sword rather than with the pen?

However, the fundamental and pressing problem in the teaching of American literature is not that of original investigation. The true teacher is always the teacher first, the researcher afterwards. Our prime consideration must be: What are the extra dividends which the teaching of our national literature yields, richer than any other can give,- dividends in the classroom and in after life, over and above the routine of information imparted and acquired?

The answer is plain. With the increasing social emphasis of modern education, and the conception of all instruction as organized on broad democratic lines to train pupils for morally directed social efficiency and for the harmless enjoyment of leisure time, *American literature has become not equally as necessary as English literature, but actually more important.* It is easier to interest the child or the man in the real problems of life through the writings of his own people without those barriers of time and space that confront us with "Beowulf" and Dryden, or even with modern writers of England, who live amid different social conditions. Because of its less enormous scope our literary history can be presented more clearly, and grasped more as a unit, with less of the encyclopedic impression that the usual study of English literature leaves. More than that, the study of American literature, especially contemporary writers, is the best of all possible solutions to the problem of leisure time. Nine cases out of ten, Shakespeare or Tennyson is a remote interest grafted onto

the life of the brighter students, but unassimilated by the duller ones. The current magazines, for better or for worse, are a part of the life of all but the most hopeless pupils, and so they should be helped to realize the value in the better instead of the worst periodicals. And magazines have been American literature in the making from Bryant's "Thanatopsis" to Edith Wharton's fiction.

The biggest dividends of all in the teaching of our native prose and poetry are realized in the opportunities for citizenship-training. In no other way can the young American, be he a Nordic or of a darker breed, be he a Protestant, a Roman Catholic, or a non-Christian—in no other way can he learn so much of the courage and ideals and wholesome humor and justice of his own country as in the straightforward tale of Miles Standish, or the adventures of Natty Bumppo, or the experiences of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer. As he grows older, let him have Franklin's plain, unvarnished tale to read, and Emerson to puzzle him, and Poe to thrill him, and Whitman to rouse him. Let him know that these are his countrymen, the spokesmen of his native land, and the young citizen's Americanization is already half accomplished.

These truths are so obvious they hardly need demonstration. The immense potential value of American literature in the creating of good citizens of the United States has won a place for his study in our schools; the colleges, more conservative, are slowly following this lead. But so long as it is taught half-heartedly, and without sufficient preparation, its value can be only partially effective. If the teachers want more preparation and study, they have only to demand it when they attend normal schools and colleges; they have only to send students to the universities who are eager for courses in their national literature. The college must inevitably respond to such a demand.

If, in the words of Emerson almost one hundred years ago, the teacher who is set apart for the high function of Man Thinking "must be a university of knowledges," then it is high time that we make room in our hearts for the best

that is said and written in our own nation's life, a place for the earnest study and enthusiastic teaching of American literature.

LITERATURE AND THE EDUCATED MAN[1]

By J. B. Wharey

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One necessarily feels a certain diffidence in speaking of the importance that should be attached to one's particular subject in the making of an educated man—not that there is the least doubt as to its importance, but for fear that there may be lurking in the minds of one's audience the query: "Why, then, hasn't it produced a finer product?" I am reminded of Stephen Leacock's unkindly thrust at some of his friends, believers in the classics, who claimed "with some heat that Latin and Greek had practically made them what they are." "This damaging charge against the classics," retorts Leacock, "should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would have been what they are, no matter what they were."

But, despite the possibility of such an *argumentum ad hominem,* I make bold to assert that in the making of an educated man no subject is more important than the study of literature. What I have to say in this paper concerns chiefly literature written in English, though, of course, many of the reasons for the study of literature in English are equally applicable to the study of literature in any other language. Moreover, I purpose to take the word *literature* in a somewhat broader sense than is sometimes given it. Any book which has permanence of interest through its power of appealing to the emotions as well as to the intellect—is literature. In other words, the term literature is not limited to literature considered as one of the fine arts—that is, *belles lettres,* but may include historical and scientific works. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of*

[1]One of the series of lectures delivered by various members of the faculty of the University of Texas during the spring of 1924 on the general subject, The Educated Man.

the Roman Empire is both history and literature; Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* is both literature and science.

It is both interesting and instructive to trace the growth of the idea that the literature of the mother tongue is worthy of a place in the curricula of our schools and colleges coordinate with that of other subjects. For the brief historical retrospect which I shall first give, I am greatly indebted to the Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed by the President of the Board of Education to Inquire Into the Position of English in the Educational System of England, London, 1921.[2] Not until 1385 did the English language receive sufficient recognition to become the medium of instruction in the English schools. In that year in all the grammar schools of England children were allowed to "have French and construe and learn in English." Through the genius of Chaucer the East Midland dialect, the language of London, of Oxford and Cambridge, became the literary language of England, but still found a powerful rival in Latin, which many schoolmasters knew far better than their mother tongue.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries came a great change. With the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, scholars fled with their precious Greek manuscripts to Italy, and Italy became the university of the world. Thither flocked the young students of Oxford and Cambridge to imbibe the new knowledge at its fountain-source. For the first time English scholars looked to *literature* as the means of freeing men's minds from the shackles of the middle ages and providing a liberal education, but it was to classical literature they turned, for the simple reason that at this time there was no literature in the mother-tongue comparable either in quantity or quality to the Latin and Greek literature. The faith which these sixteenth century educators had in the power of literature—classical literature, remember—to furnish the essence of a liberal education may be seen in a few excerpts from their writings.

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[2]This will be referred to throughout the paper as *The English Report.*

Sir Thomas Elyot, 1530, speaks of Homer as "that noble Homer from whom as from a fountain proceeded all eloquence and learning"; of Virgil he writes, "This noble Virgil giveth to a child, if he will take it, everything apt for his wit and capacity." And again, "Lord God, what incomparable sweetness of words and matter shall he find in the said works of Plato and Cicero; wherein is joined gravity with delectation, excellent wisdom with divine eloquence, absolute virtue with pleasure incredible." Roger Ascham, in the *Scholemaster,* 1568, declares of the classics, "We find always wisdom and eloquence, good matter and good utterance, never, or seldom, asunder."[3] "The students of Cambridge," writes an eyewitness, "rush to Greek letters, they endure watching, fasting, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them."

You and I, who wrestled with Latin declensions and conjugations, possibly with Greek also, more years than we like to acknowledge, and never reached the point where we could read either without a dictionary (or a pony), can only smile with incredulity at the fervency of such devotion. But that is because, scholastically speaking, we live in a soft age of the world. These sixteenth century humanists were not dismayed by the fact that the children must first learn the language in which this literature was written. Sir Thomas Elyot advocated the child's beginning Greek at seven and if by the time he was thirteen he had read Aristophanes, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Silvius, Lucan, and Hesiod, he thought that would suffice."[4]

"But the carrying out of such a system," says the Report of the English Committee, "demanded a race of supermen both as teachers and pupils. The initial linguistic difficulties interposed too hard a barrier, and offered too tempting opportunities to lovers of routine. . . . For the ordinary pupil, any study of the content of the classics or of their bearing on life practically disappeared. From the time

[3]See *English Report,* p. 30.
[4]*Ibid.,* p. 31.

when he entered the grammar school his education was little more than a formal and laborious linguistic drill.[5] Elyot had foreseen this possibility and had warned teachers against over-emphasizing grammar in case of the learner, since "it in a manner mortifieth his courage."

As yet few voices had been raised in behalf of the teaching of English in the schools. One of the most potent was that of John Locke. In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* published in 1690, Locke advocated the substitution of themes in English and the reading of "those things that are well writ in English" for themes, declamations, and verses in Latin. "Since 'tis English that an English Gentleman will have constant use of," he argues, "that is the language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most care should be taken to polish and perfect his style. . . . This I find universally neglected, and no care taken anywhere to improve young men in their own language, that they may thoroughly understand and be master of it."[6]

Little progress, it seems, was made in the teaching of English literature throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for we find Matthew Arnold, who held the position of school inspector for five and thirty years, writing in his report of 1871: "What is comprised under the word literature is in itself the greatest power available in education; of this power it is not too much to say that in our elementary schools at present no use is made at all."[7]

I cannot refrain from quoting what Arnold also wrote in his report of 1880 concerning the study of poetry in the schools. It has a two-fold significance, coming as it does from one who was both an educational expert and a poet. "Good poetry does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and of truth in alliance together; it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative. Hence its

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

extreme importance to all of us; but in our elementary schools its importance seems to me to be at present quite extraordinary. . . . I should like, above all, to see this poetry exercise made no longer an extra subject, but a part of the regular work of the school."[8]

We may say, then, by way of summary, that prior to the eighteenth century very few of the English preparatory schools paid any attention to the study of English other than as a means of drill in grammar and rhetoric. The first step toward the study of English literature is seen in the introduction into the schools of histories of literature during the nineteenth century. Some of these in the latter years of the century contained extracts from the authors themselves, but as yet the principal stress was put upon the lives of the authors and upon critical estimates of their works rather than upon the works themselves. Miss Itasca Sweet, who in 1913 presented to the University of Texas for her master's degree a thesis on *The Evolution of the Teaching of English Literature,* cites two interesting letters received by her from Rugby and Eton, respectively, each dated January, 1912. The first of these states that there are in Rugby no separate classes in English, but that it is taught in connection with all the subjects. The second, from Eton, goes more into detail. "English literature," declares the writer, "has been taught for so long that there is no record of its beginning. Although we have no separate chair of English Literature, it is often taught by all the masters in connection with history, the classics, and Divinity. Except for A and B specialists, English is not taught as a separate subject, except as an extra study. Our masters use passages from the great English classics to illustrate some subject under discussion, giving the class a rapid outline of the author's life and naming other great works by the same man. Certain books are set by the Education Board. These are studied in detail, with special notes on style, etc. Many of the tutors take some master-

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

piece as the subject of a special course of study for the senior boys in their pupil rooms, on Sunday mornings, reading or causing it to be read aloud, and explaining and commenting on the difficult passages and comparing the treatment of the subject by the author with that of other great writers of this and other countries." From these letters the secondary place accorded the study of English literature in two of England's most celebrated preparatory schools as late as 1912 is apparent.

When we turn to the English universities we find the admission of English literature as a study coördinate with other studies in the curricula has been fully as slow as in the English secondary schools. Oxford founded a professorship of Anglo-Saxon in 1795, but not until ninety years later (1885) was the Merton Professorship of English Language and Literature established. A separate professorship of English Literature was created in 1904. In Cambridge not until 1878 was a chair of Anglo-Saxon established, held for many years by the celebrated Chaucerian scholar, Walter W. Skeat. In 1896 a University lectureship in English was inaugurated, and in 1911 the King Edward VII Professorship of English Literature.

In America the teaching of English literature gained readier recognition in the schools than in the mother country. Throughout the colonial period, however, no provision was made for the teaching of English literature in the secondary schools. By the Puritans and Quakers of New England literature was chiefly valued as a means of inculcating a sound morality. Secular literature reeked of fire and brimstone, and the less one and one's children had to do with it the better. Who does not remember the imaginary compliments Hawthorne fancies being "bandied between his great-grandsires and himself, across the gulf of time?"

" 'What is he?' murmurs one gray shadow of my forefathers to the other. 'A writer of storybooks! What kind of a business in life—what mode of glorifying God, or being serviceable to mankind in his day and generation—

may that be? Why, the degenerate fellow might as well have been a fiddler' !"

During the first half of the nineteenth century, graded series of primers were introduced into the elementary schools. These were chiefly used for inculcating good morals, though they contained at times a bit of romance or an exciting story of adventure.[9] Shortly after the middle of the century, histories of English literature, soon to be followed by histories of American literature, found a place in the list of studies. Stress was placed upon historical and biographical material rather than upon the literature as such.

The progress which the teaching of English literature made in the colleges and universities of America finds an interesting, and a typical, example in the case of Harvard University. The following facts are taken from Miss Sweet's study. Not until the lapse of two centuries from the founding of Harvard in 1650 was a single course offered at Harvard in English Literature. "The Harvard catalog for 1838-39 shows," writes Miss Sweet,[10] "for the sophomore year a course in grammar, rhetoric, and composition. Themes and forensics comprised the course in the junior and senior years . . . . no literature was offered."

In 1874-1875 a third course in English literature—covering Chaucer, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, and Dryden—was offered as an elective. At the same time there were nine elective courses in Latin and Greek literature, four in German, and five in French. The courses in English literature, once begun, rapidly increased. For the year 1899-1900, twenty-four and a half courses in English were listed, nine of which were composition and rhetoric. Twelve years later twenty-two full courses in literature alone were outlined.

What, it may be asked, is the explanation of this tardy

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[9]See Itasca Sweet, *The Evolution of the Teaching of English Literature*.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 49.

recognition of the value of English literature as an academic study? It can not be attributed to any disbelief in the worth of literary studies. The attention given to classical literature and to the literature of the modern foreign languages is evidence to the contrary. It was not due, then, to any minimizing of the worth-whileness of literature, but to the belief, so widely prevalent and so tenacious, that one needed no instruction in attaining a knowledge of the literature of one's own tongue—that was something which every educated man would obtain through his own initiative; no guide was necessary. Many are sceptical even today as to whether it is possible to teach literature at all. He who is gifted with the literary instinct will, they tell us, work out his own salvation; he that is not so gifted will never through any amount of outside help be imbued with the power of literary appreciation and understanding.

Can literature be taught? is a query oft repeated, and with an implication on the part of the querist that it cannot be. But why limit the question to literature? Why not ask, Can music be taught? Or painting? Or even science? The teacher of literature, it seems to me, stands in precisely the same relation to his student as the teacher of science or painting or music to his. He cannot *create* a feeling for literature; no more can the teacher of music or painting or science for his particular subject. He can, if he is wise, develop and cultivate and perhaps bring to fruition the latent germ. He can teach his pupils what to look for in any piece of literary art, and through his own love of what is fine and genuine go far towards enkindling a similar love in the student. Since literature is life, the teacher, because of his wider experience and broader knowledge, may open up glimpses of lofty heights undiscovered and unsuspected. These heights have been scaled, it is true, by men without a guide. Few men have displayed a finer appreciation of literature than Charles Lamb, and yet he speaks of himself as one "defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution." As in other subjects, so in literature, there are men who have been self-taught; but for the

great majority of us a director—a guide—a teacher—is necessary. A knowledge of literature is not something that can be "picked up," save in the most dilettante fashion. Its mastery demands that one shall "scorn delights and live laborious days." Are the results commensurate with the cost? What may we expect in the way of practical good from such a study?

Literature should be studied because it is the open gateway to all other subjects. The student of history, of philosophy, of sociology especially, must study literature if he is to make himself master of his field, nor can the student of literature ignore these and other kindred subjects. In what better way could an insight into the political and social conditions of the fourteenth century be gained than through a study of *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Vision of Piers Plowman?* Or of the eighteenth century than through Pope and Dryden? Or of Puritanism than through the pages of Milton, and Bunyan, and Hawthorne? Ruskin declared that Browning had packed into the 125 lines of the *Bishop Orders His Tomb* all that he had said of the Central Renaissance in thirty pages of *The Stones of Venice.* Through the drama and the novel we find facilities for studying human nature vastly superior to those furnished in actual life. The psychologist can afford no less than the historian to neglect the study of literature. In other words, there is a universality about literature that is true of no other subject. Being an expression of man's life, it necessarily embraces the achievements of man in every field of endeavor.

Literature, again, offers the widest possible range to the imagination. In an age and in a land where so much stress is laid upon the practical, the value of literature as a means of awakening and enlarging the imaginative faculty cannot possibly be over-emphasized. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." In the dull routine of daily life, with its humdrum cares and bitter disillusions, how prone is the vision splendid to die away,

"And fade into the light of common day,"

unless quickened and renewed through daily contact with the world's great master-spirits.

The study of literature is essential for anyone who would learn the art of self-expression. Much may be learned through courses in composition, but no one, in my judgment, ever acquired the art of writing who relied solely upon the work of the composition class. In fact, many teachers of English have little faith in formal composition courses and would eliminate them entirely. Such a policy would be, I am sure, a serious blunder. Save for the exceptional few, unceasing drill in the structure of sentences and paragraphs, unending warfare upon comma blunders and dangling participles, is needed. But in addition to learning the rude mechanics of the art, the student must read and read widely. His stock of ideas will be vastly increased, his vocabulary enlarged, his taste cultivated, his whole mental and spiritual life enriched. A single example will suffice. Take the connotation of words. How else can one acquire a proper feeling for the suggestiveness, the atmosphere of words than by seeing them in combination with other words? He cannot learn it from a dictionary. I once had a freshman who wrote me a paper on Shylock. Throughout his paper, serving almost as a refrain, occurred again and again the statement that Shylock demanded his pound of meat. He was simply a green, untutored lad to whom, naturally enough, flesh was meat and meat was flesh. The subtle thing we call *taste* cannot be taught; it must be acquired—and acquired only through constant association with all that is fine and good.

Matthew Arnold tells of a young man in one of the English training colleges who, "having to paraphrase the passage in Macbeth beginning,

'Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?'

turned this line into,

'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?'

And I remarked," adds Arnold, "what a curious state of things it would be if every pupil of our national schools knew, let us say, that the moon is 2,160 miles in diameter,

and thought at the same time that a good paraphrase for 'Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?' was, 'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?' If one is driven to choose, I think I would rather have a young person ignorant about the moon's diameter, but aware that 'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?' is bad, than a young person whose education had been such as to manage things the other way."

The study of literature annihilates the limitations of time and space. The petty world we live in expands until it becomes commensurate with the universe itself. We live over the past; we anticipate the future. We are bound to no local habitation; we are men without a country, for all countries are ours. We belong to no particular social station, but may, at will, hobnob with kings or slaves, with the aristocrat or the proletariat, with the man of millions or the beggar and the outcast. By aid of the writer's imagination we may be transported beyond the confines of space and time into the world of the infinite. The lover of literature should be the happiest of men, for the sources of his happiness are from within. Provided he has access to books—and who has not in this day and time?—he is not dependent for his happiness upon the place he lives in, or upon good clothes, or the movies, or even a fine car.

Lowell once defined a University as a place where nothing useful is taught. One quakes with fear today in even repeating such heresy. But, in all seriousness, is it not about time that something were said of the value of education for its own sake? Something of the joy which an intelligent being feels in becoming more intelligent? Something of the spiritual enrichment of one's life that a liberal education effects? The evaluation of an education on the basis of its bread-and-butter-producing power may under certain conditions and before a certain type of audience be right and proper. But to those who have once experienced the pleasures of an enlightened mind, the joys of the pursuit of things intellectual and spiritual—the bread-and-butter motive is a low motive indeed. If our goal be a good life rather than a good living, we can ill afford to limit our

studies to the purely practical. Or—if I may be pardoned the paradox—the most practical studies in one's education are those studies that serve to lead one farthest away into the realm of the ideal and the imaginative. There is a sense in which a liberal education—and by liberal I mean one in which the study of literature plays no mean part—enables a person to "break his birth's invidious bar," to rise above his environment without necessarily effecting any change whatever in his financial or external situation. A breadth of view, a generous sympathy, an open-mindedness and tolerant spirit are the normal and expected consequences of constant association with the world's choicest spirits. In a recent novel of Jay William Hudson's, *Abbe Pierre,* the old Abbe, an inhabitant of a small village in Gascony, is made to say:

"Some of the narrowest and most opinionated people I have met are those who have dwelt in large cities, and have wandered to and fro over the earth's surface until it makes one giddy to think of their comings and goings. On the other hand, I have read about very great men whom no one would call provincial, and yet who never lived in great cities at all, and certainly never traveled far from the little village that gave them birth. . . .

"One's soul may be indeed narrow and provincial, although one has a cosmopolitan body that has traveled far and wide; and one may have a body whose eyes have never seen beyond the dawns and sunset of his native valley, and yet have a soul whose home is no less than the infinite universe! The cosmopolitanism of the body, and the cosmopolitanism of the spirit—take your choice. Happy is he who can have both."[11] "Cosmopolitanism of the Spirit" —that is the natural goal toward which the study of literature leads.

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[11]Jay Wm. Hudson, *Abbe Pierre*, MCMXXIV, pp. 53, 54.

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